Summer P2 Challenge - Office Tips

Why should I turn off my computer monitor? Isn't this insignificant?

Your monitor uses about 75 watts of electricity. If you turn it off for only 2 hours during each workday and when you leave at night you would save approximately 210 kWh each year. This eliminates 315 lbs of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year per person. This small amount of pollution prevention adds up. If we ALL did this at EPA we could eliminate 158 tons per year of carbon dioxide from Atlanta's air.

EPA has over 1000 computers.   If all the computers and monitors had the ENERGY STAR® power management features enabled, EPA could save $220,000 per year in electricity costs.

I never turn off my cubicle lights - it really doesn't matter, does it?

Your cube lighting uses about 60 watts of electricity; the same as a standard incandescent bulb. If you turn it off for only 2 hours each workday and when you leave at night you would save approximately 168 kWh each year. That doesn't sound like much, but think about the power bill at home.

168 kWh is approximately enough to run your entire residential system for about 4 days.   If we ALL did this at EPA we could eliminate another 126 tons per year of carbon dioxide from Atlanta's air.

Light switches, what light switches?

Most restrooms, conference rooms, offices, storage rooms, file rooms, and copy and break rooms have wall switches. Mama said, "Turn these off when you leave, if the room is empty, we don't own stock in the power company". Remember that phrase? A typical restroom at EPA uses about 280 watts of electricity. By turning off the light you can save from $40 to $100 per year in electricity costs.

Why do I need to save paper?

Purchasing records at EPA show that, on a per employee basis, we are using 8,700 sheets of paper per year, or 5 pages per hour per person. A huge amount of this is paper **that is not even used!**

How can I reduce office paper usage?

There are several ways to start:
1. **Eliminate your banner page and blank trailer page.**

To do this in Windows 95 - Click on Start, move up to Settings, then over to Printers. Highlight the printer you use, then click on File, then Properties, then Printer Settings. Under Banner Settings, click on the check mark in the Enable Banner line. If this check mark is removed, you have disabled the banner page! Under Output Settings, remove the check mark from the Form Feed box to disable the trailer page. Click OK to save these settings.

To do this in Windows 3.1 - Under Program Manager, Click - Misc Applications, then Click on Printers, then Options. Click on the check mark in the Enable Banner line. If this is removed, you have disabled the banner page. Click on the check mark next to Form Feed. When the checkmark is removed, you have eliminated the end page. Click OK to save these settings.

3. **Use two-sided copies**.
4. **Reuse blank pages and header pages.**

The blank pages and header pages that do come out of the printers can be reused. Either are suitable for re-use in fax machines. Several LAN printer areas in the building already have a container for placing such sheets in for reuse in the fax. Make sure your area has one, and take responsibility for occasionally re-loading them into the fax machine. The blank pages can be collected and placed back in the printer, too!

I already recycle. What do you mean by "improve"?

EPA Region 4 recycles thousands of lbs of white paper and mixed paper each year. If these are not correctly sorted, the contractor cannot pay EPA to pick up these items. The quality of the recycled paper is degraded, and the market for the product is damaged. So please remember to place your white paper in the small side saddle of your bin, the mixed paper in the middle, and the trash in the opposite saddle with the trash bag. This increases the likelihood that the janitorial staff will also correctly sort your recyclables at the end of each day.

What is a duplex printer?

A duplex printer enables you to PRINT a double-sided document, automatically reducing your paper usage by 50% (and increasing the likelihood that you will be able to make double-sided copies of it, since the 2 to 2 option seems to work better). The agency has several duplex printers already. Find out if you have one near you, and use it!

Where do I put my soft drink cans?

There are soft drink can recycling containers in all the elevator lobbies. Please do not throw away these valuable recyclables! It is very convenient to carry them to the elevator on your way out of the building each day.